

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 8-31 are now pending in the application. The limitation of claim 7 has been incorporated into claim 1; claim 7 has, accordingly, been cancelled. This amendment does not introduce new issues for consideration because the subject matter of claim 7 has already been examined.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 7-13, 15, and 23-31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Independent claim 1 has been rewritten to incorporate the limitation of claim 7. Applicants believe this amendment overcomes the remaining rejection.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Menovcik et al.

Claims 1-6, 14, and 16-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Menovcik et al., U.S. Patent 5,976,615. This rejection is respectfully traversed with regard to the claims as amended.

Independent claim 1 now incorporates the subject matter of claim 7, which the outstanding Office Action recognizes to be patentable over the menovcik patent. Each of the remaining rejected claims, all dependent on claim 1 and incorporating its limitations, is patentable over the cited reference for the same reason. Applicants thus respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully ask the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejection. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600 or directly at (248) 641-1220.

Respectfully submitted,

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